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**Water emergency, technologies and projects for the Apulia region**

**A meeting on water management was held in the setting of Agrilevante. Synergies between the world of research and management bodies for the optimisation of uses, network restructuring and wastewater recovery.**

The shortage of water in agriculture and the management of water resources are one of the main themes of Agrilevante, the exhibition of agricultural machinery for the Mediterranean, which opened yesterday at the Bari exhibition centre. The conference entitled "Water emergency in agriculture, how to intervene" promoted by Puglia Verde in collaboration with FederUnacoma was dedicated to it. Moderated by journalist and presenter Sergio Rizzo, the meeting was attended by representatives at the highest levels of all the bodies responsible for water management. The convention opened with a greeting from the director general of FederUnacoma Simona Rapastella, who recalled how Agrilevante is a laboratory for future agriculture because it tackles the salient issues for the primary sector from both a technological and political perspective. "This conference on water shows" said Rapastella, "that it is possible to address the topic with representatives from the world of research and together with representatives of the bodies that manage structures and policies relating to water resources". "In the near future, all countries will have to face the problems of food security and environmental sustainability," said Nicola Lamaddalena, Deputy Director of CIHEAM in Bari, "in a common scenario of climate uncertainty and increasing water shortages". "Technological innovations play a fundamental role in facilitating the rational use of water resources," added Lamaddalena, "and along with them the managerial and institutional aspects of water systems, including the modification of crop systems, irrigation distribution methods in line with farmers' needs, and the use of sensors and advanced systems". In addition to producing an increase in the frequency of extreme events, the rise in temperature in the Mediterranean region is significantly altering the rainfall cycles. While some areas of the basin are seeing an increase in rainfall, others - explained CREA's lead researcher Domenico Ventrella, presenting the results of the project entitled "Water 4 Afri Food" - are seeing a considerable reduction, which, combined with increasing evapotranspiration, is exacerbating the water deficit of the most vulnerable territories. Analysts' forecasts for the medium and long term foreshadow a further accentuation of the phenomenon. In this scenario - argued the Director General of the Apulian Water Authority Cosimo Francesco Ingrosso - it is essential to optimise the management of water resources for agriculture, rationalising consumption through the use of "intelligent" systems, recovering and reusing waste water, minimising the dispersion of water networks, with particular regard to those areas of the region, such as Salento, where the problem of water shortages is most marked. Antonio De Leo, industrial director of Acquedotto Pugliese, also focused on these aspects, describing some of the structure's best practices. Apulia is a region that does not have significant water resources and therefore - De Leo recalled - must meet its needs by resorting to extra-regional supplies. The Apulian aqueducts are interconnected and this characteristic - De Leo explained - allows the network to vary the sources of supply, thus compensating for any imbalances. In addition to investing in diversification, the Region has also focused on the structural consolidation of the network, to minimise losses, and on the construction of desalination plants, such as the one being built in Taranto.

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